

Pascagoula Public Library
Local History & Genealogy Department
Dudek or Dudeck Family History

GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION SHEET

Dudek

c.d. Cause of death
b. Date of Birth
p.b. Place of Birth
m. Date of Marriage
p.m. Place of Marriage
d. Date of Death
p.d. Place of Death

4 OSCAR DUDECK
(Father of No. 2)
b.
p.b. MISSOURI
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

2 CLAUDE DUDECK
(Father of No. 1)

b.
p.b.
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.

5 CARRIE MAY MARTIN
(Mother of No. 2)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

1 BOBBY KENT DUDECK

b.
p.b. PASCAGOULA, MS
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

6
(Father of No. 3)
b.
p.b.
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

3
(Mother of No. 1)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

7
(Mother of No. 3)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

8 FRANZ DUDEK
(Father of No. 4)

b. MAY 8, 1843
p.b. KONITZ, POLAND
m. FEB. 13, 1871
p.m. AMAZONIA, MO
d. JAN 8, 1931
c.d.

ELISE WYSSMANN

9
(Mother of No. 4)

b. NOV. 30, 1852
p.b. HERZOGENBUCHSEE,
d. MAR 5, 1946 SWITZERLAND
p.d.
c.d.

10
(Father of No. 5)

b.
p.b.
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

11
(Mother of No. 5)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

12
(Father of No. 6)

b.
p.b.
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

13
(Mother of No. 6)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

14
(Father of No. 7)

b.
p.b.
m.
p.m.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

15
(Mother of No. 7)

b.
p.b.
d.
p.d.
c.d.

16 CHRISTIAN DUDEK

b.
m.
d.

17

b.

d.

18 RUDOLPH WYSSMANN

b.
m.
d.

19 ANNA BARBARA AFFOLTER

d. 1866 - CHOLERA

20

b.

m.

d.

21

b.

d.

22

b.

m.

d.

23

b.

d.

24

b.

m.

d.

25

b.

d.

26

b.

m.

d.

27

b.

d.

28

b.

m.

d.

29

b.

d.

30

b.

m.

d.

31

b.

d.

SUBMITTED
BY JULIAN DAVIS

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Most of the children of Franz and Elise found the states west of Missouri enticing. Thus many of their families became and are residents of Kansas, California, Oregon and Washington. Amanda and George Van Gundy farmed in northern Missouri. John spent his life in Holt County, Missouri, on the farm his parents purchased as the result of his visit to the dentist as a small child.

Franz and Elise Wyssmann Dudeck's sojourn together in their new land lasted sixty years. Franz died January 8, 1931, and Elise lived to March 5, 1946.

Amy Dudeck Witt
March, 1992

MY GRANDPA



Family Picture (taken 1895)

(back, 1 to r) Elmer, Emma, Oscar, Amanda, Dorvin
(middle, 1 to r) Franz, Walter, Elise holding John
(front, 1 to r) Selma, LeeRoy, Archibald McArthur

DL 4

DUDEK (DUDECK) - WYSSMANN
Biographical Sketch

Beginning life together in 1871 in a log cabin high on the west hillside of Amazonia, Missouri, was not the youthful dream of Polish-born Franz Dudek and Swiss immigrant Elise Wyssmann. Married February 13, 1871, after destiny brought them as far as the railroad came in the developing United States, existence was meager.

Franz Dudek was born May 8, 1843 in Konitz, Poland, the land occupied at that time by Prussia. His mother died when he was about two, leaving father, Christian, and much older brother, Louis, his only family. His brother died in military service. A stepmother with several of her own children made life for Franz intolerable, so he apprenticed to a miller at an early age. When his father died of cholera and he narrowly survived (being removed from the death wagon when the attendant saw him move), Franz decided to leave Poland. Working his way to a port he signed, as a ship hand, on a ship bound for America. This was a common practice among unattached men, and they were never on a passenger list. He arrived at the port of New York in 1868, penniless, alone, and all his possessions in a small metal trunk. Finding employment in a brewery he stayed until deciding that such work was not for him. He had saved enough money for train fare as far as the railroad came into the land of pioneers, St. Joseph, Missouri.

Hearing of the opportunity to homestead land across the Missouri River in Kansas, Franz walked into Kansas until he was attacked by wild hogs (boars). He climbed a tree to escape their ravage. Getting back to St. Joseph he made his way up the river (north) to Amazonia in Andrew County, Missouri. There he was hired by the miller, Moser. Here he worked until 1878. Mr. Moser was also a millwright and later helped Dudek build some of the family furniture.

In the picturesque town of Herzogenbuchsee, Switzerland, Elise was born November 30, 1852, to Rudolph and Anna Barbara Affolter Wyssmann. (Robert and Marybelle Dudeck Eggert, while in Switzerland in 1984, visited the church in Herzogenbuchsee and discovered the baptismal record of Elise, dated January 2, 1853.) The family enjoyed a comfortable life. Father was the town telegrapher and Barbara was the busy mother of ten children.

Wanting the best for his large family, Wyssmann was intrigued by the presentation of great opportunities in America by "agents" who went from place to place holding town meetings. Deliberate consideration for two years brought about selling their home and making arrangements for ship passage to America in 1866. They booked passage on the steamer Florida and arrived in New York City harbor in early November 1866. (Passenger list records from the National Archives, Washington, D.C., microfilm No. 237, roll 274. Research by Raymond Dudeck.)

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Wyssmann had taken his family to his brother's home in LaHarve, France, the port from which they would leave for the new land. Henry Wyssmann was an importer-exporter, and this uncle wanted Elise to remain with them as companion to their daughter who was the same age as Elise. They would send Elise to millinery school -- ladies' hats were a necessary accessory. Living a comfortable life in a home accustomed to servant help was snatched from Elise by her older sister. Marianna strenuously contended she should be the one to stay in France. Father settled the argument. They would all go to America.

The night before going aboard ship the portholes on the ship were left open. A big storm swept through and the ship took on water. This caused several weeks delay while all baggage was unloaded and dried on the beach. When the nearly 400 passengers finally went aboard everything was still damp and musty.

Enroute dreaded cholera (prevailing disease in Europe) spread through the passengers. Four Wyssmann children - Marianne, Maria, Louisa, Rudolph, and mother, Barbara, died. Originally headed for a Swiss settlement in Wisconsin, the devastated Wyssmann came as far as the railroad, St. Joseph, Missouri. They gravitated to another group of Swiss immigrants at Amazonia, Missouri.

Rudolph Wyssmann kept his surviving six children together to young adulthood on a farm. Robert, who was mute, moved to Wisconsin and became a traveling salesman of small wares. He did marry and have a family, but communication became broken. Rosa and Lena lived in St. Joseph, working as domestics, and died as young unmarrieds. Anna married August Wilken and reared a large family near Seward, Nebraska, later moving to California. Fred eventually settled in Oklahoma with his family. The father did marry again but they parted. He followed Fred to Oklahoma and died near Enid in 1903. During ensuing years Elise (she was Lizzie to her family), Anna and Fred did keep contact during their families' growing-up years and later. The cousins enjoyed occasional visits.

Life had produced a large package of disappointment for Elise. She was deprived the good life of remaining in France. Besides dealing with the great loss of family, as the oldest surviving girl of age fourteen, she was ill-prepared to assume caring for a household in a pioneer setting in Missouri. Never again was life to measure up to her expectations, and she never laid aside "what might have been".

Married when she was eighteen, Elise and Franz (he was twenty-eight) lived in Amazonia until 1878. Franz worked at the mill and sometimes played accordian for social events. The eighty acre farm they purchased one mile north of Nodaway, Missouri, in Andrew County was back to back to the Wyssmann farm. Eleven children were born and nine lived to adulthood. George died in infancy and Bertha, the oldest, died as a young mother leaving a two-year-old son, Archie McArther, who became part of the Dudek

household. All of the children attended the Callen school; although the youngest, John, completed only one year at this school in Andrew County. When the oldest children went to school the name spelling was changed to Dudeck by the teacher. (Rationale, "deck" is spelled with a "c") Part of the family retained the original spelling.

While living in Andrew County, Elise became associated with the Church of God in the small town of Fillmore. This provided important religious and social activity for the family. Elise was and remained a zealous adherent to her beliefs. Lengthy church services at night caused some difficulty in the children's school attendance when they overslept. Being late for school, they were locked out of the building. Then they sat on the woodpile in the schoolyard and sang hymns. Camp meetings during the summer were a great community event providing the highlight of the year and sometimes romance. Daughter Emma met her husband, Will Embly, at such a meeting. There were also accidents. Father Franz once got a broken leg while working to park the wagon.

Due to years of carrying bags of grain and flour, Dudeck developed or aggravated a back curvature that worsened with age. Milling was his trade, and farming was entirely new to him, but the family made a living comparable to most in that era. Clearing circles of wooded land, by hand, in the middle of a timbered acreage, Dudeck planted fruit trees. By the time the last timber was removed adjacent to the county road a producing orchard occupied the land. Proceeds from this orchard helped provide clothing and other basics. Franz cobbled shoes for growing feet and Elise knitted and sewed many garments. Plus, the rigors of providing food and shelter from the land was constant.

Toothache brought about the move to Holt County, Missouri. Franz was taking his youngest, John, to the dentist in St. Joseph on the train. Talking with a fellow passenger, a Mr. Pointer, he expressed need for a larger farm. Thus Mr. Pointer had opportunity to sell his farm of two hundred sixty acres six miles east of Oregon in Holt County. By the time of the move in 1901, older members of the family were already on their own. By 1905 only Selma and John remained with their parents. Dorvin, LeeRoy, and their grandson, Archie, were in and out. The responsibility of farming fell to John, who was eleven years old. His father helped, but the son planted, cultivated, and harvested. John and his wife, Nellie, cared for his parents through their older years.

According to records, marriages of the Dudeck children were: Bertha to Donald McArther, February 17, 1892 (Bertha died in 1895); Amanda to George Van Gundy, November 12, 1896; Walter to Cora M. Poyner, June 15, 1904; Emma to William Embly, July 2, 1905; Oscar to Carrie May Martin, November 1, 1905; Elmer to Edna Danner, no date; Dorvin, LeeRoy and Selma never married; John to Anna Barbara Cornelia Sommer, December 25, 1918.